

# Stop Search Community Scrutiny Panel

## Minutes

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**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2022, 6:30pm – 8:30pm**

**The Leadon, HQ**

### **Attendees:**

**Panel Members:** Kay Selwyn (Chair), Steve Talbot, Robin Agascar, John Sharrock, Zunaid Raja, Richard Townshend

**Police Officers and Staff:** Mark Soderland, Grant White, Aatiqah Patel, Annabel Staley

**Apologies:** Ruth Bonser, Adele Owen, Anthony Saunders, Camella Francis, Michelle MacFarlaine

**Minutes:** Annabel Staley

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Since the previous meeting, two members have resigned from the panel.

Mark Soderland introduced himself as the new Chief Inspector for the Forest and Gloucester Local Policing Area and the lead for Stop and Search. He thanked members for the time they have given to this panel and highlighted the importance of the panel in increasing legitimacy in policing. He stated his desire to ensure that we are targeting the right people with this power and can fully account for any disproportionality that exists.

Mark has recently spoken to the lead for Stop and Search at Bedfordshire Constabulary, who are viewed as a force to look to for best practice, and was encouraged to hear that we have a lot of the same practices in place at Gloucestershire Constabulary.

### **Frequency of meetings**

The panel discussed this in depth. Members agreed that the gap between meetings (3 months) currently feels too long and they often struggle to recall the discussions from the previous meeting. They also questioned whether only holding 4 meetings per year enabled them to review a sufficient number of searches. If a member misses a meeting, they have to wait 6 months between meetings.

The panel considered monthly and six weekly meetings but the former raised potential capacity issues for both panel members and police personnel and the latter raised potential difficulties in the meetings becoming out of sync with routine. They therefore agreed to try meeting on a bi-monthly basis and review it in 6 months.

### **Membership to the panel**

The panel discussed ways to increase meeting membership. It was advised that a message had been sent out on the Gloucestershire Constabulary social media sites providing details about the panel and how to sign up.

The panel considered putting out an advert on the radio or producing a flyer for upcoming Constabulary events e.g. the sports day or the open day. Also discussed asking the Youth Advisory Group and the cadets if they would like to be involved.

**Action:** MS and AS to follow this up.

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## Action updates

### 130562

Date: January 2022

Time: 2330 – 2335

Gender: Unknown

Ethnicity: Unknown

Age: Unknown

Location: Stonehouse

Reasonable Grounds: Strong smell of cannabis from vehicle, grinder seen in passenger footwell.

Legislation: S23 Misuse of Drugs Act 1971

Outcome: No Further Action

Panel Discussion: The panel assumed that this was an abandoned vehicle but felt that more information was required for this search.

Panel Decision: AMBER

Action: Ash Shingler to request more information from the officer who conducted this search.

Update: The vehicle was found 'abandoned' at the roundabout. Moments after we stopped behind it, 2 people approached and confirmed that they were the occupants and told us that the car had broken down. It appeared strange to me that the driver would leave the vehicle in the live lane at entrance to a roundabout and make no effort to move it off the carriageway. The driver smelled of cannabis and admitted to using cannabis so I suspected that she had been using prior to driving and the reason she abandoned the vehicle in such a precarious place was due to some level of intoxication. The grinder was seen in the vehicle and there was a strong smell inside so the vehicle was searched after the driver was searched. The driver passed a roadside drugswipe, no drugs were found.

### 130712

Date: February 2022

Time: 0130 – 0144

Gender: Male

Ethnicity: White

Age: over 18

Location: Coleford

Reasonable Grounds: Officer came across a white panel van and noticed a male sat in the driver seat in camouflage gear. Another male was stood outside of the car and appeared to be looking into the bushes with a flash light. After asking the males what they were up to, their accounts were completely different. They later identified that they were 'lamping'. Both males detained and items seized.

Legislation: S2 Poaching Prevention Act 1862

Outcome: Other

Panel Decision: GREEN

Action: Ash Shingler to send a good work report to this officer for detailed grounds.

Update: Feedback received with thanks.

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A panel member advised that the dashboards have changed and so the searches can no longer be separated by ethnicity.

**Action:** MS to follow this up.

### **Scrutiny of Stop Searches**

The panel decided to look at searches in the Cheltenham Local Policing Area between April 2022 to today. They decided to look at searches where no further action was taken.

#### 131009

Date: April 2022

Time: 2320 – 2328

Gender: Male

Ethnicity: White

Age: over 18

Location: Cheltenham

Reasonable Grounds: A report was given by our CCTV that males wearing black tops and blue jeans were sniffing their hands as if they were doing drugs. A colleague who was already present directed me towards the named male and asked me if I could search him.

Legislation: S23 Misuse of Drugs Act

Outcome: NFA

Panel Decision: **GREEN**

#### 131014

Date: April 2022

Time: 2236 – 2237

Gender: Female

Ethnicity: White

Age: over 18

Location: Cheltenham

Reasonable Grounds: Smelt of cannabis in vehicle. Intel linking the vehicle to recent drug dealing.

Legislation: S23 Misuse of Drugs Act

Outcome: NFA

Panel Decision: **GREEN**

#### 131032

Date: April 2022

Time: 1100 – 1111

Gender: Female

Ethnicity: White

Age: over 18

Location: Cheltenham

Reasonable Grounds: Two females were reported to have stolen from a store. Descriptions given.

Cameras sight one female on Ambrose Street. An officer saw the female matching the description.

Female was searched and four items were recovered.

Legislation: S1 PACE Stolen Property

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Outcome: NFA

Panel Discussion: The panel felt it would have been useful to provide details of the matched description to increase legitimacy. Also, members questioned the NFA action if items were recovered. Does this suggest the female had acquired the goods legitimately? It is possible that the store decided not to follow up with a complaint.

Panel Decision: **GREEN**

#### 131037

Date: April 2022

Time: 1100 – 1111

Gender: Female

Ethnicity: White

Age: over 18

Location: Cheltenham

Reasonable Grounds: Received notification from security that two females had been shoplifting. Two females left the store in separate directions. Both females were followed by police CCTV, description provided as white female with black hair wearing blue jogging bottoms with cream gilet pushing a pram. Suspect matched this description.

Legislation: S1 PACE Stolen Property

Outcome: Other

Panel Discussion: This additional information made number 131032 slightly clearer. It appears that there were 2 females, 1 was in possession of goods legitimately and 1 was not. This explains the difference in outcome.

Panel Decision: **GREEN**

#### 131066

Date: April 2022

Time: 2130 – 2135

Gender: Male

Ethnicity: White

Age: under 18

Location: Cheltenham

Reasonable Grounds: Police were initially called to reports of a bin fire. Upon arrival, 3 individuals were identified by CCTV as being in the vicinity of the fire. One was highlighted as having a gas cannister on them so was asked if they did. Although not illegal, advice would be given. The one male then admitted to having cannabis so was detained for the purpose of a search.

Legislation: S23 Misuse of Drugs Act

Outcome: NFA – small wrap of herbal matter found

Panel Discussion: The panel discussed the link between the bin fire and the search for drugs. It transpired that the male with cannabis was arrested and then de-arrested. The male was returned home and his mum was spoken to.

Panel Decision: **GREEN**

#### 131104

Date: April 2022

Time: 1645 – 1651

Gender: Female

Ethnicity: White

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Age: under 18  
Location: Cheltenham  
Reasonable Grounds: Match descriptions of youths suspected to be involved in starting fires and causing graffiti to a fence. Search was negative.  
Legislation: S1 PACE Articles for causing criminal damage  
Outcome: NFA  
Panel Discussion: Concerns were raised about the 'matching descriptions' comment without providing additional information. This was picked up in the HMICFRS report.  
Panel Decision: **GREEN**

### 131110

Date: April 2022  
Time: 1535 – 1545  
Gender: Male  
Ethnicity: White  
Age: under 18  
Location: Cheltenham  
Reasonable Grounds: Males seen to hide a bike in the bushes and run away, leaving the bike. This is an area known for bike thefts and criminality.  
Legislation: S1 PACE Going equipped to steal  
Outcome: NFA  
Panel Decision: **GREEN**

### 131128

Date: April 2022  
Time: 2204 – 2207  
Gender: Male  
Ethnicity: White  
Age: over 18  
Location: Cheltenham  
Reasonable Grounds: Reports of males in car with machete.  
Legislation: S1 PACE Offensive weapons  
Outcome: NFA  
Panel Discussion: There was a linked incident to this which stated that an off duty PCSO saw someone officers were looking for standing outside the vehicle. The vehicle had been involved in an aggravated burglary where a machete was used. As a result, officers were looking for this vehicle.  
Panel Decision: **GREEN**

### 131376

Date: May 2022  
Time: 0052 – 0130  
Gender: Female  
Ethnicity: White  
Age: over 18  
Location: Cheltenham  
Reasonable Grounds: Subject was stopped in a vehicle. Officer was made aware of information that the vehicle was linked to drug use and drug dealing. Subject is a known drug user and was one of 4 persons in the vehicle.

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Legislation: S23 Misuse of Drugs Act 1971

Outcome: NFA

Panel Discussion: The panel questioned whether the timings were too long for a search. A member clarified that it depends whether the officer perceives the timing question to be at the start of the interaction or start of the search.

Panel Decision: **GREEN**

### **Review of BWV**

The panel discussed the battery life of BWV. It was confirmed that the battery of the devices would not last a whole shift and therefore, it must be turned on and off. The Head of the Professional Standards Department has recently sent out a request asking officers to ensure they turn the BWV on at the start of interactions and record until the end of the interaction.

Also discussed using BWV in hospitals. Hospitals have signs up stating that the public should not record. Where do the police stand with this?

**Action:** MS to check our policy around filming in hospitals and provide an update at the next meeting.

We were unable to successfully review any BWV footage. This requires further investigation as to whether the footage is not available or this is the result of user error.

**Action:** MS and AS to meet and streamline the process for viewing BWV.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Due to a change of roles, this will be GW's last meeting. The Chair thanked him for the time and support he has given to the panel.

**Meeting Ends**

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